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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, we praise You because of Your righteousness, and lift our hearts in adoration to You, the King, Most High. Pour eternity into these brief lives of ours and use us for Your glory.

Lift our lawmakers to the heights of noble living, renewing them with Your hope and strengthening them with Your power. Lord show them how to make wise use of their days to become the people they ought to be and to do the things that make for peace in our Nation and world. May their highest motive be not to win over one another, but to win with one another by doing Your will.

Lord, we ask that You sustain the victims of the seismic devastation in Japan. We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COONS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business until 4:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

At 4:30 p.m. the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 10, the nomination of James Boasberg, of the District of Columbia, to be a U.S. district judge for the District of Columbia. There will be up to 1 hour of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on that nomination.

Senators should expect two rollcall votes at 5:30. They will be in relation to the confirmation of James Boasberg and cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 493, the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 2011.

The current continuing resolution expires this Friday. We expect the House to send us a 3-week CR on Tuesday or Wednesday. We hope we can work out an agreement to consider the bill before the end of this week.

DOING THE COUNTRY'S BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my thoughts and those of the entire Na-

tion, and certainly every Member of the Senate, are with the people of Japan. The earthquake that shook that nation has made the entire world tremble, and the tsunami that swept over its shores has engulfed us all with grief.

We are heartbroken at the images we have seen and the stories we have heard. We share the agony of the families who have lost loved ones and the anguish of those still searching for the missing.

The earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent catastrophes have created a humanitarian crisis of the first order, and the United States will do everything we can to ease Japan's pain and help it heal. As the devastation and rescue efforts continue, we know Japan and the world will meet this tragedy with tenacity and will respond to the immense loss with immeasurable hope.

This dreadful disaster is not stronger than the people of Japan's resolve to recover and rebuild, and it is no match for America's determination to help a friend in need.

Mr. President, it is difficult to think of the Senate's business at such a time as this, but we must. It is difficult to think of the Senate's business after hundreds of thousands of lives have been forever changed in an instant. Every matter seems immaterial in comparison, and our use of the adjective "emergency" when discussing budget concerns seems so misplaced.

But we must also focus on the business of our great country, and that is what the Senate will do this week. I hope both parties and both Houses will find the courage to come together before the weekend on a plan to fund the country.

I remind my Republican colleagues that this Friday's deadline is one they set; we didn't. We asked for 4 weeks to work, and they demanded 2 weeks. They asked for March 18. March 18 awaits us at the other end of this week, so it is time to get serious.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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